

## FOR GRANDPA'S SAKE.

My grandpa went to war long years ago. I never saw him, but they told me so, And how, after a battle, sad news came, Among the "missing" was my grandpa's name.

They never heard of him again, they said, And so we know that grandpa must be dead; And when I think of him, so good and brave, I wish we knew where he had found a grave.

When Decoration day comes, every year, I feel so sad, and sometimes shed a tear, To see the soldiers' graves all spread with flowers, While grandpa cannot have one rose of ours.

So if some little Southern girl should know A nameless grave where never blossoms grow, I'd love her so, if there some flowers used lay For grandpa's sake, this Decoration day.

—Youth's Companion.

## The Last Charge.

BY J. WHITEFIELD SCATTERGOOD.

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Dressed in his only suit of navy blue, Old Weak-Eyed Jones sat uncomfortably on one of the backless benches in front of the speaker's stand. The post adjutant was reading the post orders. The boys in blue, scattered hither and thither, bent an attentive ear and held their yellow-corded hats to one side to shade their fading eyesight from the waning sun.

Far away under the trees of the park lounged hundreds of people. Polite attention prevailed among those with in hearing distance; farther away the hum of voices and shouts of unsuppressed laughter arose on the air in unmistakable volume. This was strange to the ears of Weak-Eyed Jones. To him no event was more solemn than the present, and it seemed the same dignity and reverence he felt should actuate the conduct of others.

The air was suffocating. Early in



Old Weak-Eyed Jones sat on one of the backless benches in front of the speaker's stand.

the day the heated atmosphere had become saturated with clouds of choking dust, which rolled into the city behind hundreds of incoming farmers' conveyances. But Weak-Eyed Jones took it all with a generous degree of humility and uncomplaining. A young couple at his elbow indulged so busily in conversation he could not hear the voice of the adjutant, yet he bore it silently. Even though his obscure sight, years before made almost useless by a relief mine ball, which carried away the bridge of his nose and grazed both eyes, was powerless to penetrate the dust-heavy distance between him and the speaker he was secretly happy.

His meditations were cut short by a sudden commotion at his elbow. People were hurrying from their seats; the program must be over. He was carried along with the rest, towards the speaker's stand, but he hadn't gone far when he noticed some one trying to speak. Above the noise he just caught the last phrase: "Will close with a selection by the young ladies' quartette."

Then it wasn't over yet! There was to be one more number! He tried to be seated, but a buxom country woman jostled hard against him, nearly sending him off his rheumatic legs.

The quartette commenced to sing, but their voices were drowned in the tumult of confusion.

Presently a drum corps somewhere out in the street struck up "Marching Through Georgia"—the line commenced to form. Hurried along with the throng, Weak-Eyed Jones took up a marching position with others of his blue-coated comrades. The heat was still more stifling here, as they stood waiting for what seemed like hours. Presently Weak-Eyed began to grow faint. The morning had found him physically indisposed, but never yet having missed meeting with his soldier comrades on the thirtieth of May, he didn't propose to do today. It might be the last time—probably it would—but he'd see this once!

The band up the street struck up "The Star-Spangled Banner"—he was conscious of the column moving. He had stood still so long his legs were almost at a stand and he made him stagger, but with the use of his cane he maintained his balance and managed

to move along. Shouts of "Hurrah! Hurrah!" greeted his ears from every side. Proudly he lifted his head and threw his shoulders back with uncanny military dignity.

The ovation continued with increased enthusiasm as they passed up the street. Someone tried to retaliate with a "Hurrah for the boys of '61!" but the voice was lost in the lusty tide of cheering for "The boys of '61!" Following the squad of soldiers came a bicycle brigade, men on horseback, and, lastly, wagon loads of flower girls dressed in white—wagons for strong, healthy girls, while decrepit old veterans must go afoot.

As the long line rounded a corner and passed from the boulevard into an east and west thoroughfare, Weak-Eyed Jones tottered. Bravely he pulled his remaining strength together and ambled on, his faltering footsteps unable to beat time to the rapid music. Many of his comrades, too, had long since forgotten how to march. And how few they numbered now—these veterans!

Mount Zion cemetery was a beautiful spot—lifted above woods and sky just beyond where the lake nestled quietly between two hillsides—the valley, with its ribbon of a rivulet, winding verdure-laden at its woody base, the azure heavens outlining its great white gates, its marble monuments, its flowering shrubbery, its trees of green, with rare exactness beyond.

Weak-Eyed Jones raised his eyes to the hill yet in the distance. He could see but the outline of the hallowed spot rising against the lurid sky. His spirit was awed! The heavy march, his steps were getting more and more uncertain. A momentary dizziness came over him.

"Hark!" Suddenly the music of the fife and drums floated to his ears with a strangely familiar sound. It took him back to the front again, back to the days of '61! Once more he was a youth—strong, vigorous, in arms! And could this, then, be Thomas' brigade?—and yonder—yonder hill—Missionary Ridge where, proudly drawn in battle array, the Confederate legions awaited them calmly with a welcome of leaden death?

And whence all this rub-a-dub-dub, rub-a-dub-dub, that fired the very blood within the veins? Ah! Foolish question! Why ask when there was Soffels, the drummer boy? Nobody but Soffels could drum like that! Soffels was the only one who could make his drum "talk" in accents so clear and true—now gay, gay as the morning sunlight; now sad—sad as the hour of death, as he turned the tide of battle into victory or defeat!

"Take the rifle-pits at the base, then halt and reform!" Weak-Eyed Jones heard the order as clear as on the day it fired the souls of thousands of Union soldiers to battle and to victory. The march of many feet was heard; the glint of polished bayonets seen. The stars and stripes stood

straight to the breeze as like clock-work that human phalanx moved to obey.

Was that the foe there, entrenched at the base of the hill, calmly waiting with muskets primed and ready? But never a man did he see falter. Onward they pressed, with music soaring and flags flying, into the fray and into the face of death. Then, when the first volley had been met and passed, they were over the breastworks and upon the foe. He felt an absence about him then. He looked for Billy. Billy was gone! A bullet had carried him down at the first onslaught, he concluded. Then he saw the men in the trenches waver for a moment, club their muskets for a last feeble stand. That was all; then they fled. The Federal troops, forgetting their orders in the enthusiasm of the moment, were as quickly over the ramparts and after them—through woods, over logs, past gulches, and into the face of a murderous musketry from above!

Presently Weak-Eyed reeled and fell from the marching column, striking his head as he fell. Grasping a shade tree by the side of the thoroughfare he slowly raised himself to his knees. Had he, too, been struck by a flying bullet? He put his hand to his head. Yes, there was blood!—and the bridge of his nose was gone! But he forgot the pain momentarily as he heard the order: "Charge the crest of the hill!" Pass from mouth to mouth as it came from Grant. His pulses leapt. His blood fairly bounded at the words. He tried to rise and obey, but he could neither see nor walk.

"Hurrah for the stars and stripes!" he shouted in the exultation of the moment, but the effort cost him throes of pain.

A vehicle full of belated celebrationists, hurrying after the procession, heard his shout. "A drunken soldier," they said. Weak-Eyed thought an ammunition wagon was hurrying to the front.

His sight cleared a little after the first daze from his fall. In the distance he saw clouds of dust arising.



Weak-Eyed Jones feebly raised himself upon his elbows and peered at the blood-red sun.

"The smoke of the battle," he thought. The music was still playing, clearer and louder than ever, indicating the enthusiasm of battle. Someone approached his side.

"Only a scrape—comrade!" he said. "Never—mind me—I'll be all right—soon. There's work for you—up there!" He indicated the hill with a wave of his hand.

"I tell you he's not drunk; he's sick." The man at his side addressed some one near at hand.

In pity they tried to raise him to his feet. His legs would not support him; he collapsed again at the foot of the tree.

A roll of drums floated across the valley and into the old man's ears. "Hark!" he exclaimed, raising himself with heroic effort. "I hear—the sound of victory!" Volleys of musketry rang out on the air. "Give it—to 'em—boys!" he added.

"Chances are against him," a voice was heard to remark nearby. "He must be taken to a physician."

"Aw! He's only had a drop too much 'ol' drink. I tell you," some one answered.

Weak-Eyed didn't hear; his whole mind, his whole being was centered in another direction. Back of Mt. Zion's crest the sun began to set, and, pres-

ently, there came the long, low, solemn roll of the drums—the slow, melancholy, almost human roll.

"Ah! It's—all—over!" he said, faintly.

Only a few women were at his side now.

"It's—over," he gasped, "an'—Billy—you'll have to go—with the rest—into the trenches—an' under the sod. But—not—me! They said—I'd—go home. I'm wounded. I'll—tell her—Billy—when I get there—that you—died a—fightin'—an' a—think—in—o—her! An' I'll—give—her—th—things—you sent,—her picture—an' th' testament! You've—got—mine—yet—Billy. I give—em—t—ye, but—I'll—not need—em."

He attempted to rise, but could not. Some one held a flask to his lips and he drank.

The procession meantime wended down the hill again.

The first columns swept past where Weak-Eyed Jones was prone upon the grass. Some one stepped out to hail some passing vehicle. The mayor's carriage approached. "A jolly old drunk, there!" the occupants remarked, then bowed away up the street and out of hearing. Another carriage swept past without a heed, a load of flower girls drew near. The driver was beckoned to halt, but his attention was centered upon his screaming, laughing passengers.

The sun was now almost set.

Presently Weak-Eyed Jones feebly raised himself upon his emaciated elbows, peered with all the power he could muster through his almost sightless eyes in the direction of the blood-red sun and moved his lips to speak: "Yes—they're waitin'—fer me, Billy. I wish—you—was—a—goin'—too!" he said.

Later, when strange hands gathered from the wayside all that was mortal of the dauntless soldier, a withered spray of honeysuckle slipped unheeded from his nerveless grasp. In the meantime the city had resumed the noisy tenor of its way, and Memorial day and its meaning had all but become forgotten.

**Battle Ground Made Sacred.**  
Old soldiers on Memorial day live again in the memories of the past. The fierce battles and weary marches are looked back to with pride. Of the anniversary day at Gettysburg an Eastern writer says:

"Reader, when you visit the field of the first day's fight, and you walk past the spot where Reynolds fell, and enter the woods where every gnarled tree is torn by shot and shell, you will see a line of monuments crossing your path. Pause when you reach them, stand for a time by the stone that marks the center of the twenty-fourth Michigan Regiment and recall the day of the battle. You will then be standing near the center of the Iron Brigade. On the right of that organization was the brigade of Roy Stone, and on the left that of Col. Chapman Hiddle. Walk the line of these brigades from right to left—an, yes, you may walk the line of the whole First Corps—and you cannot step without treading upon ground every inch of which was saturated and made sacred by the blood of heroes."

**Honor the Living.**

Persons of middle age who but dimly remember the closing days of the awful struggle and the scenes of joy that followed the return of the soldiers to their homes, participate in the ceremonies of the day with feelings of reverence, and the children with almost a sense of awe. Reverently and gratefully we remember the services of those who fought and suffered for the union. We can but strew with fragrant flowers the graves of the dead; we should with fragrant words remember the living. Not long are they to be with us. More graves all for tribute each year. Let us do the living honor while we may.

**Remember the Soldiers.**

A worthy custom of Memorial day exercises is the strewing of flowers on the waters in memory of the sailors of the civil war who perished in the mighty conflict. And surely worthy of honor are the men who fought with arrogant and our other great naval leaders. In the exercises of the day they should never be forgotten.

## PEACE!



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